

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
DISTRICT OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

United States of America

v.

Criminal No. 10-cr-004-02-JL

Eric Mckinstrie

ORDER OF DETENTION PENDING TRIAL

In accordance with Section 3142(f) of the Bail Reform Act, 18 U.S.C. §§ 3141 et seq., a hearing was conducted on March 2, 2010, for the purpose of determining whether to detain defendant, Eric Mckinstrie, who has been indicted on one (1) count of Conspiracy to Distribute Oxycodone in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 846, five (5) counts of Distribution of Oxycodone in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 846(a)(1), and one (1) count of Distribution of Cocaine in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 846(a)(1).

Under 18 U.S.C. § 3142(b), a court, in making a determination regarding detention, must evaluate the risk of the defendant's flight, the risk to the safety of any other person, and the risk to the safety of the community. In circumstances when detention is not mandated by the court, the court is nonetheless empowered to impose conditions on release. 18 U.S.C. § 3142(c).

Pursuant to the provisions of 18 U.S.C. § 3142(g) a court, in assessing the risks noted in 18 U.S.C. § 3142(b), shall consider the following: (1) the nature and circumstances of the offense charged; (2) the weight of the evidence as to guilt; (3) the history and characteristics of the accused, including family ties, past history, financial resources and employment; and (4) the nature and seriousness of the danger to any person or the community that would be posed by a release.

During the course of a hearing conducted pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3142, the government typically retains the burden of persuading the court that “‘no condition or combination of conditions will reasonably assure’ the defendant’s presence at trial.” United States v. Perez-Franco, 839 F.2d 867, 870 (1st Cir. 1988)(quoting United States v. Palmer-Contreras, 835 F.2d 15, 17-18 (1st Cir. 1987)); United States v. Patriarca, 948 F.2d 789, 793 (1st Cir. 1991). For its part, the government is required to offer clear and convincing evidence of dangerousness; and a preponderance of the evidence to prove risk of flight. See Patriarca, 948 F.2d at 792-93. Facts necessary to find that no combination will reasonably assure the safety of any person and

the community require satisfaction of the "clear and convincing" standard. 18 U.S.C. § 3142(f)(2).

In specific instances, delineated in 18 U.S.C. § 3142(e), a presumption arises that no condition or combination of conditions will reasonably assure the appearance of a defendant and the safety of the community. Among the instances where a presumption arises is the situation where,

the judicial officer finds that there is probable cause to believe that the person committed an offense for which a maximum term of imprisonment of ten years or more is prescribed in the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 801 et seq)

18 U.S.C. § 3142(e)(3)(A).

In the case at hand, the indictment itself establishes probable cause to believe that the offenses charged have been committed and that the defendant has committed them. Further, the offenses charged against defendant are ones for which a maximum term of imprisonment is ten years or more, as prescribed in the Controlled Substances Act, 21 U.S.C. §§ 801 et seq. See United States v. Dillon, 938 F.2d 1412, 1417 (1st Cir. 1991). Thus, Section 3142(e)'s rebuttable presumption that "no condition or combination of conditions will reasonably assure [defendant's]

appearance . . . and the safety of the community . . .” is triggered in this case. See 18 U.S.C. § 3142(e), (f); 21 U.S.C. § 841(b)(1)(C); see also United States v. Vargas, 804 F.2d 157, 162-63 (1st Cir. 1986).

In order to counter the statutory presumption, the defendant must present evidence which demonstrates that “what is true in general is not true in [his] particular case.” United States v. Jessup, 757 F.2d 378, 384 (1st Cir. 1985). Notably, as noted by the defendant, the burden is one of production, not of persuasion. Id. at 380-81.

Here, I find that the defendant fails to rebut the presumption with regard to risk of flight and danger to the community. Specifically, the weight of the evidence is overwhelming. The nature of the offense involves the distribution of a controlled substance on multiple occasions over a period of months. The defendant has three (3) prior state court drug offense convictions, two (2) involving the sale of a controlled drug, and state court violations of probation and parole for using controlled substances and/or alcohol. The pretrial services report documents extensive drug and alcohol use

over a period of many years, including following his successful completion of Summit House in 1995, which at least continued into 2009. He has not had employment for almost 8 months, had only sporadic employment in prior years, and currently has a suspended drivers license impeding future employment opportunities. While the defendant is a lifelong resident of New Hampshire and has proposed what appears to be a responsible third party custodian, those facts do not overcome the statutory presumption in this case. Additionally, separate and apart from the presumption imposed in this case by 18 U.S.C. § 3142(e)(3)(A), I find based on the representations offered during the hearing that no condition or combination of conditions will reasonably assure the defendant poses no serious risk of flight or danger to the community.

Accordingly, for the reasons stated herein and developed on the record during the hearing, it is ORDERED that the defendant be detained pending trial.

The defendant is committed to the custody of the Attorney General or his designated representative for confinement in a corrections facility separate, to the extent practicable, from

persons awaiting or serving sentences or being held in custody pending appeal. The defendant shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity for private consultation with defense counsel. On order of a court of the United States or on request of an attorney for the Government, the person in charge of the corrections facility shall deliver the defendant to the United States Marshal for the purpose of an appearance in connection with a court proceeding.

SO ORDERED.

/s/ Daniel J. Lynch
Daniel J. Lynch
United States Magistrate Judge

Date: March 2, 2010

cc: William E. Morse
Brian M. Quirk, Esq,
U.S. Marshal
U.S. Probation